

Senator Slap, Representative Haddad, and distinguished members of the Higher Education and Advancement Committee,

I am from New Haven. I am a graduate of Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. I now reside in New Haven and work at Wesleyan.

I am testifying in strong support of Senate Bill 1108, An Act Concerning Access to Reproductive Health Care by College Students at Public Institutions of Higher Education. This bill will support the educational success of students by addressing barriers and increasing access to reproductive health care services for our state's residential campuses.

Connecticut has 99,351 students enrolled in its higher education system and in 2020-2021, and individuals who identify as women are over 60% of the student population. By increasing access for individuals to make informed decisions about their reproductive lives, people can fully pursue their educational and career goals.

I now work at Wesleyan University, and come into frequent contact with students, though my position is not in student support. Despite my position not being explicitly student facing, Wesleyan students have come to me for questions about where to find birth control, access emergency contraception such as Plan B, and go to see an OBGYN. The largest barrier I see for accessing reproductive health care is access to a car. S.B. 1108 would alleviate this barrier when it comes to accessing medication abortion.

If a Wesleyan student needs an abortion, the closest clinic to obtain a medication abortion is in Meriden. Accessing the clinic in Meriden is incredibly difficult if that person does not have a car, and only about half of students have a personal vehicle on campus ([LINK](#)). Distance and time become a barrier as students do not have the flexibility in their schedules and may feel embarrassed to ask for excused absences due to reproductive health care needs.

You should support this bill, because it will make a difference in the lives of more than half of all university students in Connecticut. It will set an important precedent for making abortion care available on higher education campuses. Access to abortion care should not depend on how much money you make, where you attend school, or if you have a car. College students have limited time, resources and access to transportation. Many colleges in the Connecticut University system are in rural locations, where it is not easy to catch an Uber or taxi, or the bus. S.B. 1108 can protect students' ability to make reproductive decisions that support their futures with timely access to services from pregnancy care to contraception to emergency contraception to medication abortion. This bill will improve access to necessary reproductive health care services that support their well-being, reproductive autonomy and post high school success.

Thank you for reading my testimony. In conclusion, I urge the committee to support S.B. 1108, as it will increase access to reproductive health care. If passed, the bill will create a substantial impact, both in the short and long term for students enrolled in Connecticut residential universities, and will support the health of my generation and our future.

Sincerely,
A Wesleyan Alum, and New Haven resident